

To achieve a standard of living among
the top ten states in America

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GOAL THREE

OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 To increase personal income and assets of all citizens
- 3.2 To provide opportunities and support to overcome Louisiana's poverty crisis
- 3.3 To ensure quality healthcare for every Louisiana citizen
- 3.4 To improve the quality of life of Louisiana's children
- 3.5 To ensure safe, vibrant, and supportive communities for all citizens
- 3.6 To protect, rehabilitate, and conserve our coastal ecosystem
- 3.7 To preserve and develop Louisiana's natural and cultural assets
- 3.8 To protect Louisiana's environment and support sustainable development

Goal Three:**To achieve a standard of living among the top ten states in America****Objective 3.1 - To increase personal income and assets of all citizens**

A frequent misconception of economic development policies is that the only and ultimate goal is to create more jobs in the state. Adding more jobs is vitally important, especially in a state such as Louisiana that suffers from severe out-migration. However, the ultimate goal of economic development policies must be to boost income levels, personal assets, and the quality of jobs for all citizens of Louisiana. If more citizens have higher quality jobs, personal income (and per capita personal income) increases, enabling more people to enjoy a better quality of life, purchase their own homes, save money for retirement, and provide for their children's futures. Moreover, policies must also provide avenues for wealth-creation and asset-building for all citizens, particularly those with lower incomes.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 3.1 include:

- Per capita income as a percentage of U.S. by region (for Louisiana and 8 districts)
- Economic Performance Rank (among the 50 states)
- Average Annual Pay Rank (among the 50 states)
- Employment per year (for Louisiana and 8 districts)
- Homeownership rate

Objective 3.2 - To provide opportunities and support to overcome Louisiana's poverty crisis

Louisiana is ranked 46th for the percentage of the population living in poverty in 2001. If we are to make substantial progress as a state, we must be proactive about helping those living in the poorest conditions to receive training, jobs with a future, quality healthcare, and safe homes and communities in which to live. Nothing less is acceptable.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 3.2 include:

- Poverty rate (for Louisiana and 8 districts)
- Unemployment rate (for Louisiana and 8 districts)

Objective 3.3 – To ensure quality healthcare for every Louisiana citizen

Quality healthcare is important for a healthy economy and high quality of life. Louisiana must ensure that all citizens have access to quality healthcare. Benchmarks under this objective are focused on ensuring that citizens who are traditionally underserved have the access they need to allow them to be productive participants in the state's economy and have a good quality of life.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 3.3 include:

- Percentage of persons without health insurance
- Number of citizens per primary care practitioner practicing in rural areas
- Number of parishes with a shortage of healthcare professionals
- Number of citizens in poverty per community healthcare center

Objective 3.4 - To improve the quality of life of Louisiana's children

The way children live, think, behave, and grow impacts the cycle of poverty in which Louisiana is now entrenched. With more than a quarter of our children now living in poverty, Louisiana must make a special effort to ensure that our children receive comprehensive attention. This attention includes the basics – food, housing, healthcare, and education – with particular focus on education. State policies and programs should also infuse a good work ethic into child development by teaching children that there are substantive opportunities available for those who strive to move ahead.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 3.4 include:

- Percentage of children without health insurance
- Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)
- Percentage of children in poverty and extreme poverty
- Number of school-based health clinics

Objective 3.5 – To ensure safe, vibrant, and supportive communities for all citizens

Employees, particularly workers employed in knowledge industries, can choose to live anywhere. The safety of communities and the access to cultural amenities are some of the most important aspects for attracting new people to regions and for keeping those already here from departing. Louisiana must address issues such as crime, order, and cleanliness. By raising the level of civic engagement, neighborhoods can become safer, more harmonious, and less tolerant of violence.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 3.5 include:

- Index crime rates – rate and national rank (overall, violent, property)
- Percentage of population with access to drinking water meeting water quality standards
- Percentage of uninsured motor vehicles

Objective 3.6 – To protect, rehabilitate, and conserve our coastal ecosystem

The state's strategic plan for the survival of Louisiana's coast has as its mission, "to sustain a coastal ecosystem that supports and protects the environment, economy, and culture of southern Louisiana, and that contributes greatly to the economy and well being of the nation." Louisiana's coast is not only important as a natural resource, but also as a vital component of the state and nation's economic infrastructure. The state and nation must create a sustainable, viable coastal Louisiana.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 3.6 include:

- Cumulative acres of coastal wetlands loss that will be prevented by projects (constructed and authorized)

Objective 3.7 - To preserve and develop Louisiana's natural and cultural assets

Louisiana is blessed with vast natural resources and a unique culture that make it a special place to live. While creating a Louisiana for the 21st century, we must also preserve and develop the Louisiana's heritage and natural assets. Those tangibles and intangibles are important for quality of life as well as for their economic value to the state. Louisiana must further protect our natural treasures and market our assets to those who haven't experienced their uniqueness and beauty.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 3.7 include:

- Preservation & enhancement of the Atchafalaya Basin (acreage protected, restored, improved, or opened for public access and the number of recreational & tourism facilities constructed and opened)
- Amount of State-owned lands for natural resource management by the Department of Wildlife & Fisheries and the Department of Parks & Recreation
- Total Louisiana species listed as threatened, endangered or rare plants

Objective 3.8 - To protect Louisiana's environment and support sustainable development

Louisiana's past includes too little attention to preserving the quality of our environment. However, our state's industries also have a capacity for environmental remediation and protection that often goes unacknowledged. For example, the petrochemical industry has helped Louisiana achieve a greater reduction of emissions in the past decade than any other state, while simultaneously increasing its Gross Sector Product. Louisiana must work with its industries to help them develop more environment-friendly practices by positioning itself to become a global powerhouse in the field of environmental technology. Our strong base of industry, the Mississippi River that drains two-thirds of North America, our vast wetlands, and the longest coastline in the United States provide the ideal living laboratory for our scientists and practitioners to develop the future of environmental technology.

Benchmarks to track progress toward Objective 3.8 include:

- Number of State air monitoring stations and parishes not meeting National Ambient Air Quality Standards (non-attainment stations, non-attainment parishes, and total state exceedance days)
- Pounds of toxic chemicals released for air and water (TRI gross pounds and core criteria TRI gross pounds)
- Percentage of Louisiana assessed water bodies fully allowing their designated uses
- Number of health advisories posted

